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ADDRESS

BY

GENERAL ISAAC S. CATLIN.

ON THE OCCASION OF THE
CELEBRATION OF THE
100TH ANNIVERSARY
OF AMERICAN INDE-
PENDENCE IN BROOK-
LYN, N. Y., JULY 3-4.
1876.



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To: Mrs. Loebe
Secretary to the President
with compliments of
the author

Brigadier General W. H. Loring
Brave Major General W. H. Loring

Centennial Celebration

in Brooklyn, N. Y.

Elaborate preparations were made by the Municipality of Brooklyn, N. Y., upon July 3-4, 1876, to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of American Independence on Fort Greene, the historic scene of one of the early battles of the Revolution. In the words of the Official Committee, "accommodations were made for seating five thousand people, and standing room for at least two hundred thousand. A platform had been erected in front of the Martyrs' Tomb, facing the Plaza," for the Mayor and the Orator, the City Officials and specially invited guests. "Long before the hour for the ceremonies to begin, all the seats were taken and every inch of standing room occupied." General I. S. Catlin had been invited by the Mayor and Commonalty of the city to deliver the oration. Alderman Francis B. Fisher, Chairman of the Committee of Arrangements, introduced Mayor Frederick A. Schroeder as the presiding officer, who made a brief and appropriate address, after which he introduced "the orator of the evening, General Isaac S. Catlin."

ORATION.

Mr. Mayor and Fellow-Citizens—I would not if I could, and I could not if I would, attempt to conceal the emotions of gratitude that fill my heart at having been selected to address such a magnificent assemblage upon such a momentous occasion. And while I gratefully recognize the honor bestowed upon me by the partiality of my fellow-citizens, I have also humbly to confess my weakness when confronting the vastness of themes which press upon me for consideration. This is no ordinary occasion; this is no common spectacle. It is not, however, the multitude assembled here, not the inspiring strains of music that delight the ear, not the brilliant pyrotechnic display that dazzles the sight.

which alone give character and significance to this gathering. Something more majestic and impressive gives importance to the occasion. A great epoch in the history of the world is near at hand. To-night the nation is in travail—to-morrow she will give birth to a New Century. The hearts of forty millions of people are throbbing with joy as the glad hour approaches. All over this land, and wherever the spirit of Liberty is cherished, to-morrow's sun will bring gladness and exultation. The people of thirty-seven great States will kneel around a common altar, under the resplendent folds of a common flag, and, forgetting all else, will pledge anew "their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor" to transmit this magnificent inheritance of Freedom, unimpaired to their children and their children's children.

A century of Republican government! An hundred years of government "of the people, by the people, for the people!" A marvel of history! No longer an experiment, no longer an Utopian scheme, no longer a dream of the theorist, but a firm, fixed, accomplished, unalterable fact—a City set on a hill that cannot be hid. Conceived in Liberty and founded in Justice, sustained and nourished by the gentle, yet powerful influence of laws and by the divine sentiment that all men are created equal, the American Republic has grown from a rude, imperfect, simple structure, to a strong, symmetrical, stupendous edifice, whose broad foundations and magnificent proportions are impregnable alike against the assaults of enemies without or malcontents within. Foreign powers may predict the downfall and decay of our institutions, and foreign potentates may scoff at representative government as here illustrated, but the Republic will stand. Sedition may disturb the public tranquility; insurrection may raise its bloody hand; desperate men may unfold the banner of rebellion; aye, treason itself may lift its hydra head and attempt to overthrow the Government, but the Republic will stand. Call me superstitious if you please, call me a fatalist if you choose; I believe this Western land of ours was decreed by Almighty God to be a Land of Liberty, was dedicated to be the asylum of the oppressed of all nations. I believe that as God protected and saved the children of Israel and led them safely through the Red Sea, so has His special providence saved and protected this people and led them safely through the red sea of revolution and rebellion, and will at last lead them safely through the black sea of venality and corruption in which they are now struggling.

The discovery of this country seems like an inspiration of Deity; and what but the Divine Spirit could have impelled men and women to leave the delights of home and neighborhood to encounter the perils of ocean to reach this land? What but the Divine sympathy could have upheld them in the dangers and solitude of an unbroken wilderness, among the haunts of savage beasts and still more savage men? Oh! my fellow citizens, they preferred liberty in a hovel to tyranny in a palace. They came here to be free and independent. They came here to drink from the pure spring of liberty—to speak, to act, to believe, to worship as their consciences dictated. The first breeze that reached them as they approached this new land was laden with the incense of liberty; and when they landed here they found that freedom was indigenous to the very soil and climate. It was in the air, the sea, the land, the wood, the streams; aye, the very sunlight from heaven was radiant with its beams. Is it strange, then, that a land thus discovered, thus christened, thus consecrated, should to-day be the glory of the earth? Is it marvelous that generations thus born, thus nursed, thus reared, should at last grow up to be champions of liberty and free government? Is it wonderful that in such a land the first gradual encroachments of feudal customs and feudal laws should have been resisted, and at last driven back to the abodes of tyranny where they belonged? Is it wonderful, when the strong arm of Royalty, backed up by ships of war and reinforced by battallions of soldiery, seized their cities and blockaded their ports, that they resolved to suffer beggary and famine, insult and violence, rather than surrender the precious boon of liberty? And is it wonderful, when to beggary and famine, to insult and oppression, was added the cold blooded murder of unoffending citizens, that plain, plodding men, in an instant became heroes, and mild-mannered women were filled with more than Spartan courage, and that the continent became a camp of heroes and heroines in a day? Is it a marvel when Jonas Barker and Isaac Mussey, Robert Monroe and Jonathan Harrington, Samuel Hadley and John Brown were slain upon the commons at Lexington, that three millions of people, with faces upturned to heaven, in one grand chorus, cried, "Woe to the hand that shed this costly blood?" Oh, no! They would have been untrue to their faith, untrue to their consciences, untrue to their traditions, untrue to their God, had they done less. And right here was the unwritten Declaration of Independence. Six murdered men on the green at Lex-

ington; six pale faces in the grey of the early morning; six little mounds of earth in the old church yard; these tell the story of American Independence more thrillingly than the most eloquent tongue or the most graphic pen.

Lexington was no battle, though art and poetry and eloquence have immortalized it as a conspicuous event of war. But it was of vastly greater importance and significance than a battle—it was pregnant with bigger consequences than any display of military genius or strategy. Parliamentary encroachment was hateful to the patriots, but it had been long endured; the Stamp Act and Port Act stirred up the indignation of the people, but not to a resort to arms; taxation without representation aroused the resentment of the colonists, but they would, perhaps, have trusted to time for a repeal or modification of that obnoxious measure; but when these parliamentary outrages were supplemented by red-handed murder, in the name of a foreign King, Minute men of Liberty sprang up in every hamlet and town, in every valley and on every hill-top, to avenge the blood of their brethren. The news of the massacre flew upon the wings of the wind to the people of all the colonies, and with one united voice they shouted defiance across the Atlantic to the tyrant upon his throne, and then and there, before God, proclaimed their freedom and independence forever. True, the formal Declaration of Independence, with its pomp and circumstance, its solemn ceremony and its splendid recital of grievances, did not occur until more than a year after this tragical event; yet in the hearts of the American colonists independence was proclaimed when the first hostile shot of the royal army struck down an American patriot.

I yield to no one in my veneration of those illustrious men who framed and signed, and formally issued to the world, the Declaration of Independence. It was, indeed, the great charter of our rights and principles, as well as the great exposition of our wrongs and grievances. It "ought to be hung up in the nursery of every King, and blazoned on the porch of every Royal Palace." But I cannot forget the sufferings and sacrifices of the people. I cannot forget that they were far in advance of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. I cannot forget the irrefutable fact, that the American Revolution emanated from the people alone. While the sages, the statesmen and philosophers hesitated and pondered, "like men to double business bound," the people, the rustic heroes, incited by the simplest, the highest,

the surest instincts, mounted the steed of flame, and pursued the enemies of their country.

Franklin told Chatham that "he never had heard from any person the least expression of a wish for a separation from Great Britain." Washington said that "no such thing as independence was desired by any thinking man in America." Jefferson said "he never heard a whisper of a disposition to separate from Great Britain until after April 19, 1775." John Adams said "it was the greatest slander on the province of Massachusetts to say that there were any who longed for independence." At this day you will hardly believe that such sentiments were uttered by these illustrious men. It seems almost sacrilege to repeat their own words, though deliberately uttered but a few months before the occasion of the Declaration of Independence, in which they figured so conspicuously. But it shows that then, as now, as it always has been, as it always will be, the men of learning, the popular leaders and statesmen are behind the people. Franklin and Washington, Jefferson and Adams were no exception. They were not up with the people. They had not correctly felt the pulse of the people. They were not near enough to them to feel the full, patriotic pulsation of their hearts. They were noble patriots, but were deeply engrossed with negotiations looking towards conciliation with the King and with Parliament. They loved liberty, and desired free government; but they were striving to avert the terrible calamity of war, even at the sacrifice of independence and freedom. But the people, the earnest, honest people, went to the front, as they always do in great progressive movements, and forced the issue. It was the common people who uncomplainingly suffered beggary and famine when the port of Boston was blockaded. It was the laboring people, the brave, honest sons of toil, who unflinchingly bared their bosoms to the deadly missiles of the enemy at Lexington. It was the uprising of the people, without leaders or generals, which drove the invaders from Concord. It was four score hardy Green Mountain boys, under the lead of the gallant Ethan Allen, who undertook and accomplished an enterprise that has scarcely a parallel for personal daring in the history of warfare. Undisciplined and inexperienced in arms, these eighty heroes attacked a formidable fortress, constructed by the most eminent engineers, defended by a company of regular soldiers; and in twenty minutes from the command "to charge," it was surrendered to Allen, who had demanded it "in the name of

the Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress.”

So, I repeat, that long before the Declaration of Independence was formally issued from Independence Hall, the great mass of the American colonist had distinctly and irrevocably declared themselves free and independent, and had commenced the struggle which resulted in the establishment of that freedom and independence. They kept alive the spirit of liberty; they led the great column of advancing civilization; they ushered in the hour of human emancipation. Had legislators and statesmen kept pace with the spirit of the people, it is my firm conviction that the Revolution would have begun and ended years before it did, and with infinitely less loss of life and treasure. So, in the War of the Rebellion, had the President and Ministry, the Lawmakers and Generals, caught inspiration from the people, and acted promptly, vigorously and fearlessly; had the Proclamation of Emancipation been issued as the first great war measure, the rebellion would have been crushed in eighteen months, and millions of debt, and thousands of precious lives would have been saved. But Lincoln and Seward, and their co-peers—noble, generous and patriotic though they were—tried diplomacy with the slave power, as Franklin and Washington and Jefferson tried conciliation with the throne power, and with the same unhappy result.

But let me not longer mar the grandeur of this Centennial occasion by a spirit of criticism. I have said this much in justice to those who always stand the shock and brunt of battle, who are foremost in every struggle for reform and progress, but whose deeds are seldom sung by the poet or eulogized by the orator. I trust I shall not be classed with demagogues when I say that I have always been and shall always be an earnest advocate for the rights and dignity of the laboring people. It is the peculiar glory of this Government that it has dignified labor, and elevated the laboring classes, and to-day the men who are dearest to the American heart are the men who earn their bread by the sweat of the brow. They are, indeed, the salt of the earth. “The history of our country is their history; the renown of our country is their renown; the brightness of their doings is emblazoned on its every page.” And, thank God, they can never be corrupted. The highest officers of Government may fall short of duty; cabinet ministers may be impeached for venality; legislators may prostitute themselves to the God of Mammon; official depravity may penetrate into all the departments of Government for a

time, yet, as long as labor is honorable, as long as laboring men are honest and intelligent and true to their traditions, as long as the great system of common schools is part of our civil polity, as long as the ballot box is kept inviolate, the integrity of our institutions will be preserved, the great wars for Independence and Union "will not have been in vain," and freedom and free government will not "perish from the earth."

Fellow-citizens, we are standing upon the threshold of a second century, and the night is fast spreading its pall over the bier of our first-born. Standing in the sombre shadows of the one, and looking towards the gleaming lights of the other, the mind is bewildered, the imagination is perplexed, the tongue is dumb. If the past and present are an earnest of the future, what scenes of wonder and enchantment are in store for our posterity! For one hundred years we have heard the steady tramp, tramp of progress to the tune of Liberty and the Union, and for a hundred years to come, aye, down through unnumbered ages, we, and those who come after us, will hear the same steady tramp to the same thrilling music.

Before the beginning of the century which is now drawing to a close, progress had been paroxysmal. A day of light was quickly followed by a night of gloom. Great and good men, whose examples and deeds were beneficent, appeared for a day, to be succeeded by the viceregerents of the Evil One. All along through the centuries were scattered here and there oases in the deserts of ignorance and superstition; but they could not be reached by the millions who were groping in darkness and desolation. Men were born at intervals that left us rich legacies of eloquence and poetry, of art and philosophy. Great captains lived whose grand achievements and mighty conquests are the wonder of the soldier and the student of the present time; but it was not until the commencement of the Democratic movement in America that the human race began its grand march towards the fulfillment of its high destiny.

Until God gave wisdom to men to declare that all men are created free and equal, with the inalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, there was a block in the great wheel of progress. Until a government was ordained that repudiated the blasphemous doctrine of Divine Right and hereditary privileges; that recognized the unlimited sovereignty of the people; that recognized as a fundamental truth that all virtue, all intelligence and all wisdom

could be found only in all the people; until manhood and individual merit, rather than the accident of birth, were the passport to distinction; until the broad fields of action were thrown wide open to individual effort, there existed insurmountable barriers to the expansion of civilization. But when this great democratic movement began, when these great truths were declared, when these great principles were incorporated into constitutional government, a new and unexampled impetus was given to progress in every department of human affairs. And their beneficent influence was not confined to our own country or our own continent. It was not circumscribed by boundaries of States or nations, by distinctions of race, or diversities of language, but it spread far and wide into all nations, and among all peoples wherever intuitions of liberty existed, and wherever mind and conscience were struggling for wider development and larger empire. And for one hundred years it has been marching steadily forward, ever increasing, ever expanding, until to-day it is the universal verdict of mankind, that no former century, no not all the centuries of the past, have yielded such prodigious results in social progress, in political thought, and in industrial pursuits as that which is just passing away.

In our own land these results have been most amazing. Three millions of people have multiplied into forty millions. Thirteen impoverished colonies have multiplied into thirty-seven magnificent empires. The white wings of their commerce sweep across every lake and every sea. Railroads thunder through every valley and over every mountain, ribbing and welding the nation together with iron bands. The telegraph, with wings of lightning, carries our thoughts and words in a flash to the remotest lands. By its magic power the merchants of Berlin and New York, of London and San Francisco, speak to each other as if face to face; and friends, separated by expanse of ocean and stretch of land, converse together as though at the morning meal.

In every department of industry the most marvellous advances have been made. Inventive genius has almost transformed the face of nature, so that in very truth old things have been done away, and all things have become new. The "iron gates" of the mountain have been opened, the deep bowels of the earth have been penetrated, the rugged caves of the ocean have been explored, and rich streams of wealth and golden treasure have flowed therefrom into the laps of the people and the coffers of the nation.

The "giant brood" of useful arts—the cotton gin, the sewing machine, the mowing, the reaping, the threshing machine—are all the inventions of our own country and our own countrymen during the last century, and have superseded the old drudgery of the needle and of agriculture, and lifted it up into the region of refined and skilled labor. Our institutions of learning are among the master works of the century. They have grown commensurately with the growth and expansion of our country, and are adapted to the genius and spirit of our form of government. Our system of public schools is peculiarly the result of Republican institutions, and to-day is the hope of the Republic. Coeval with our political system, they are deeply intrenched in the hearts of the American people, and are as dear to them as liberty itself. Colleges, academies, and private literary institutions are well. They are, indeed, a chief glory of our country. From them come forth many of our noblest statesmen, our wisest philosophers, our sweetest poets and our most distinguished men of science. But they are inaccessible to the millions of our youth, while our public schools are accessible to all. In them the rich and the poor, the high and low, the black and white, the native born and those from foreign climes, can enter and be fitted to perform all the duties of highest citizenship. As we value our national existence we must protect the common schools; for as long as they are part of our social and political system, so long will intelligence and virtue be disseminated among the people, and so long will our Government be stable and steadfast. God bless and prosper the common schools of the land! The Press of the country has become an agent of immense power and influence. In the words of a Brooklyn journalist, "there is nothing in America more marvellous and more thoroughly American than the enterprise of the leading journals. It is within the bounds of truth to say that more money is spent in one day by any one of the chief metropolitan dailies in collecting telegraphic news from all the ends of the earth, than is expended by all the newspapers of England in a month." What a brilliant page in the history of the dying century! What an eloquent exhibit to present to the world in favor of the substantial merits of Republican institutions. For the press of America is the great popular educator and schoolmaster. It is the Prophet, Priest and King of modern times. It creates, modifies and changes public sentiment. It stands ready to grapple with the monsters of vice wherever they

may expose their hideous shapes. No station is so high that it cannot reach it, no position is so degraded that it cannot descend to it. No temple is so sacred, no shrine so holy, that they can escape its searching scrutiny. It audaciously ascends the throne and exposes the folly of Kings; it mounts into the chair of State and boldly uncovers the weakness of administration; it climbs into the pulpit and tears off the mask from the face of hypocrisy; it scales the seat of Justice, and lays bare the wickedness and crimes of mercenary judges. Daring, bold, aggressive, unjust sometimes, subject to great abuses, yet held to a strict accountability, the influence of the press has been of incalculable benefit, not only as the great teacher of the masses, but in directing public opinion in the midst of important events involving the hope and destiny of the nation.

These, fellow-citizens, are some of the triumphs of the last century in America—triumphs of mind, of reason, of truth, of principle. Other nations may boast of splendid navies and mighty armies; of great conquests on sea and land; of cities devastated, and fields laid waste. But our greatest conquests, our most prized victories, are conquests of science, of philanthropy, of civilization, are the victories of peace and good will towards men.

And yet no nation on the face of the earth has a brighter record in the field or on the sea than our own. Indeed, she was born in the blaze and tumult of battle. She is the offspring of victorious war. Associated with her flag, so radiant and beautiful to-night, are the most renowned and heroic achievements. That flag, the ensign of our nationality, the symbol of our liberty, has never yet gone down before an enemy, and by the help of Almighty God, it never will. A century ago three millions of people tore down the far-famed banner of St. George, and in its stead lifted up and unfurled the Stars and Stripes, and forty millions of people to-day, and untold millions of the future, will uphold and defend them, and all they represent, until human institutions and human governments shall be no more. But our military and naval achievements were not the work of standing armies and navies. Our armies and navies sprang spontaneously from the masses—were the organized patriotism of the country. I do not mean to disparage the skill, the efficiency and ability of our regular Army and Navy. They are the nucleus around which the patriotism of the country has rallied, and by whose examples and precepts great armies and navies have been organized and disciplined

with astonishing expedition. But in great crises, in times of great national peril, such as have suddenly overtaken our country, the volunteer soldiery, influenced by sentiments of patriotism, have been her greatest bulwark and her surest dependence. And, yet, every right thinking man, every man who appreciates the glories of the past, the grandeur of the present, and the still grander possibilities of the future, must be proud of the history of our little army and navy, for it is a history of perils and patriotism, a history of suffering and sacrifice. True, it is a history of warfare, a history of blood. But some of the most brilliant pages in the annals of the country are the bloodiest pages. The brightest pages are those whereon are written the deeds of our Washingtons, our Putnams, our Scotts, our Grants, our Shermans and our Farraguts. The proudest names inscribed on the pillars of fame are the names of our great war-heroes. Familiar as household words though they are, lisped though they are by infant lips at every fireside, yet the mention of their loyal names always kindles a flame in the heart of every patriot. Strike out the name of Washington and his great deeds as a soldier, what a glorious light goes out! Strike out the name of Scott, what a bright page in history is blotted from the record! Strike out the name of Grant, and the name and fame of our greatest soldier disappear! Strike out the name of Sherman, him of the eagle plume, with his grand march to the sea, and we lose the most brilliant military feat recorded in history. Strike out the name of Sheridan, the "lightning-eyed" Sheridan, with his famous ride from Winchester, and you extinguish one of the most marvellous, dashing, dazzling personal victories known to warfare. Strike out the name of Thomas, "old Reliability" Thomas, and his gallant resistance at Nashville, and you wipe out a name that has shed imperishable lustre on the American nation. Strike out the name of Hooker, fighting Joe Hooker, and his charge up the steep of Lookout Mountain, and we lose one of the most perilous and successful assaults ever made by an army. Strike out the name of Farragut, his loyalty to the flag, and his unparalleled exploits on the rivers and seas, and you lose a space in modern history that never could be filled. Strike out the names of Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson and their grand exploits on Southern battle fields, and you rob a brave but misguided people of an inheritance which is their pride and glory. And all of these names illumine the past and present register of the Regular Army and Navy. Illus-

trious names, my countrymen, fitting names to be mentioned in this great assemblage, on this patriotic occasion!

I shall not, at this Centennial time, when, if ever, the largest philanthropy should be exercised and the greatest magnanimity should be shown, attempt to tear open wounds which the gentle influences of time and circumstance are fast healing. Sure of the fruits of the late war, proud of the new glory it has shed upon the nation, exultant that no slave or shackle mocks the name of freedom, I have respectfully, aye, reverently, mentioned the names of the two leading military heroes of the South. It is enough for me that we are all Americans—that our country is saved, that our country is one. It is enough for me that to-morrow we shall all read the same Declaration of Independence, clothed in all its new glory and new significance. Men of the North, men of the South, men of the blue and men of the gray, I greet you as Americans all! I give you joy, that after the pains and throes of civil strife, after the shock and uproar of battle, the old flag of the stars and stripes is our common flag still, that the old Union, no, not the old, but the new Union, without a fetter or a bondsman, is our common Union. My enemy of 1861, my brother of to-day! I stretch out my hand over no bloody chasm, over no line of dead, but over a common country to clasp your hand in the fine, sweet spirit of patriotism; and I conjure you for the sake of the honor, the glory and perpetuity of the Union, to take it in the same spirit. I implore you to let the dead past bury its dead, and remember with me the prophetic words of America's greatest statesman, that it is to that Union "we owe our safety at home and our consideration and dignity abroad."

Fellow-citizens of Brooklyn, this scene, this great throng, this vast concourse of human faces, glowing with pride and patriotism, has no uncertain meaning. Indeed, he who runs may read. It impressively illustrates the imperial sentiment of Americanism—a sentiment that knows no party, no section, no creed, and no nationality. Though I see around me men of every party, of every creed and nationality; though I see Democrat and Republican; though I see Catholic and Protestant; though I see the countrymen of Lafayette, of Steuben, of Montgomery and Pulaski; though I see men who have abandoned the lands of their birth, the lands of their fathers; who have left friend and kindred and patrimony, yet I see them all here uniting as one man, as one common brotherhood, in observing this great memorial

service.

I am not here as the panegyrist of any nationality. I know no German, no Irishman, no Frenchman. I know none but Americans. The blood of all has flowed in the same stream and drenched the same field. I have seen them all on the same battle ground, baring their breasts with Trojan heroism to storms of shot and shell, standing undaunted and undismayed in the midst of gore and carnage.

On this occasion we would be unfaithful to duty, false to a proper sense of obligation, did we not undeterred by fear of criticism, give special honor where honor is so eminently due. The gentlemen of the Brooklyn Centennial Union are entitled to our profoundest gratitude for their intelligent appreciation of this commemorative event. To them is due the credit of the conception, and largely the successful consummation of this magnificent demonstration. At great sacrifice of time, of money, of material interests, they have for weeks concentrated their efforts in preparing for this celebration; and now, with the liberal aid of the Municipal authorities, the prompt and patriotic co-operation of the military organizations and civic societies, all under the skillful management of a gallant Brooklyn soldier, General James Jourdan, they have presented to us the most imposing scene, the most inspiring spectacle, we have ever beheld. Art has lent her fairest decorations; the great industries have clasped the hand of Art; music has blended with both her grandest themes; poetry has followed with her inspiring verse, and all combined have given us a patriotic jubilee befitting the city, befitting the historical importance of the time and occasion.

And, citizens of Brooklyn, we have the highest reasons to celebrate this day and this event. We would have been "degenerate sons of illustrious sires" had we passed them by without appropriate commemoration. No city in the Union has been more prospered by the success of the Revolution than ours. No city in the nation has grander memories or holier associations of the times that tried men's souls than ours. Every clod and stone is vocal with patriotic reminiscences, and every street is redolent with the sweetest yet saddest recollections. The very lamp-posts are shining records of the heroes and battles of 1776. There are present to-night citizens of Brooklyn, the children of men who espoused the cause and died in the service of the Revolution, who have heard from living lips the thrilling story of the advance, the retreat, the rally, the charge, and the final

glowing victory.

No city in the Union has brighter evidences of the advance of refinement, of culture, of progress, than ours. From a little village of 3,000 inhabitants, it has grown to be the third city in the Union, with a population of over 400,000. From this hallowed spot we behold the homes of a thrifty, a happy, a virtuous and an intelligent people. We behold the domes of our great municipal buildings, our academies of art, our temples of justice. We behold the cupolas of our public schools, the spires of a hundred churches, the roofs of 10,000 factories. Wherever our eyes may rest, we behold the signs of the most advanced civilization.

But, if we pull aside the veil from the near future for a moment, newer wonders and sublimer exhibitions will meet our sight. Aye, they already begin to dawn upon our bewildered vision. Look! What massive towers are they that loom up out of the waters of the Bay? For weeks and months and years they have been slowly rising, niche upon niche, stone upon stone, mass upon mass, until, now, they rise up like gray giants preparing for mortal combat. What are they, do you say? Why, they are monuments of human enterprise, of human skill, and human industry; and soon, hanging upon these mighty columns, stretching over and high above the East River, spanning these two great cities, will be constructed a broad highway, over which half the commerce of the continent will be transported.

Fellow-citizens, it is almost time for the clock of the century to strike one. It is almost time for the old signal gun to announce the new birth. It is almost time to hoist the Stars and Stripes, on yonder flag-staff, to wave out the Old and wave in the New. It is almost time to begin the grand chorons of the "Star Spangled Banner," to ring out the chimes of a thousand bells, to fire the salute of a hundred guns. You are all on the tip-toe of expectation—you are all impatient to behold the grand transformation scene that closes the drama of the first century. Your faces, your demonstrations, the hour, the patriotic exercises to come, admonish me to retire. But one unfinished duty still holds me here. An unseen, yet irresistible power rivets me to this spot. The air is filled with spectral shapes. Behold! a radiant form clothed in celestial light, descends before the tomb of the martyrs. See! It rolls away the stone from the door of the sepulchre. Look! The door is opened. Awake, ye patriotic dead! Come forth, ten thousand martyrs of the prison ships! Mount these hills and with one

wild wail startle the petrified souls of those who have so long neglected you. Tell them the unwritten story of your prison lives. Tell them of your horrible tortures, your excruciating pains; how you were scourged and starved for the honor of your country. Tell them how you died—alone, unwept—that they might live. Tell them for this they owe you gratitude, devotion, worship. Tell them for a century you have mouldered in unhonored and unknown graves! Tell them for a hundred years, while the nation has been prospered and the city blessed, no marble slab or monumental tomb has risen to mark your resting place! Tell them this and let them refuse you justice if they dare.

“Oh, my countrymen! it is we who need a monument to their honor; we who survive, not having yet proved that we, too, could die for our country. We need a monument that the widows and children of the dead, and the whole country, and the shades of the departed and all future ages may see, and know that we honor patriotism and virtue, and liberty and truth; for next to performing a great deed and achieving a noble character, is to honor such characters and deeds.”

At the conclusion of General Catlin's address Alderman Francis B. Fisher read the memorial relative to the prison-ship martyrs.

The following resolution was unanimously adopted:

“Resolved, That a Committee of Twenty-five citizens, with authority to add to their number, if deemed desirable, be appointed by His Honor the Mayor, of which Committee, the Mayor of the City, from time to time, shall be ex-officio Chairman. The duty of this Committee shall be to make the necessary arrangements and take early steps looking to the raising of a Martyrs' Memorial Fund of \$50,000, for the erection of a suitable monument on the site of the present tomb at Fort Greene, in honor of the Prison Ship Martyrs of the Revolution.

At a given signal the American Flag was hoisted to the top of the staff on the Fort, the entire audience joining in singing the “Star Spangled Banner.”

A salute of one hundred guns from the summit of Fort Greene concluded the ceremonies, and at about 1:30 A. M. of Independence Day, the people separated for their homes.”

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